

28 January 2022

*Dr. Ron McNair's Legacy Lives On*

Dear Colleagues,

As we do every year at this time, Winthrop's McNair staff and students are taking some time to reflect on what the accomplishments and sacrifices of Dr. Ronald E. McNair mean to us. Today marks the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Challenger explosion that killed Dr. McNair and his fellow astronauts. It is our hope to honor his trailblazing legacy through the post-baccalaureate achievements of Winthrop's McNair Scholars.



<https://youtu.be/oXRueqLMUbg>

Since 2009, the U.S. Department of Education has provided us with significant funding "to increase the attainment of Ph.D. degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society" "through involvement in [undergraduate] research and other scholarly activities" (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triomcnair/index.html>).

Winthrop's McNair program is funded to serve 30 undergraduates every year. At least two-thirds of each cohort must be first generation college students from low-income families and the remaining students must come from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in graduate education.

So far, Winthrop has served 173 McNair participants.

- 71% (123) are first generation college students from low-income families.
- 71% (122) come from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.
- 168 (97%) persisted to graduation or are currently completing their baccalaureate degree.
- 87% of our 151 graduates enrolled in graduate programs.
- 66% of the 122 alumni who graduated over 2 years ago have at least one graduate degree.
- 19 alumni have earned doctorates (see the list here: <https://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/mcnair/WMDoctorates.pdf>).

The grit and brilliance of these amazing students, expertise and support of their faculty mentors, work of the [Advisory Board](#), dedication of the McNair staff, investment of the administration, and help from staff all over campus make this possible. In particular, our program could not function without the efforts of the good folks in Grants & Research, Financial Aid, Student Financial Services, Records and Registration, Residence Life, Printing Services, Accounts Payable, The Foundation & Alumni Relations, ONCA, Undergraduate Research, Eagle STEM, Honors, ASC, and others throughout University College and the institution.

The [McNair Advisory Board](#) has invited 12 new students to join the program this year. We are always recruiting, so please encourage bright and motivated students from Winthrop and other SC universities to check out McNair.

For more information about Winthrop's Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, please check out our website (<https://www.winthrop.edu/mcnair/>).

Thank you for all you do to support McNair Scholars, staff, and faculty.  
Cheryl

**Cheryl Fortner-Wood, Ph.D.**  
*Proud Director, McNair Scholars Program  
Professor of Psychology*

 Winthrop University

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POST-BACCALAUREATE  
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

 WINTHROP UNIVERSITY  
McNAIR SCHOLARS  
PROGRAM